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Brentwood Urban District Council



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER

OF HEALTH

FOR

1944.

Brentwood Urban District Council.

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PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (Part Time) :

B. Fraser Beatson, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H.

BACTERIOLOGIST AND ANALYST :

E. V. Suckling, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.,
The Counties Public Health Laboratories,
Gidea Park, Essex.

SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR :

F. G. Spencer, M.R.San.I., Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Food
Inspector, and Smoke Inspector, Royal Sanitary Institute,

ADDITIONAL SANITARY INSPECTOR :

(Vacant since March, 1942).

CLERKS AND SHORTHAND TYPISTS :

Miss R. E. M. Bailey
Miss V. L. Ledden

BRENTWOOD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

*Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the year 1944.*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to present herewith my Annual Report on the health of the district for the year 1944.

It is drawn up in accordance with Circular 49/45 of the Ministry of Health dated 19th March, 1945, which states, as in previous war years, that the Report shall be on abbreviated lines.

I have pleasure in recording that the health of the district has again been well maintained despite the difficulties of the times.

In my Report for the year 1943 I was able to show the smallest number of cases of Diphtheria ever notified in this district. It is with great satisfaction that I now record an even lower figure for this disease which reflects the growth among parents of a true knowledge of the value of immunisation.

I desire to thank my staff for their loyalty and hard work throughout the year. Special praise is due to the Senior Sanitary Inspector who for so long has had to carry on single-handed.

I also acknowledge with gratitude the sympathetic co-operation of my fellow officials in other departments.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

B. FRASER BEATSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Public Health Staff.

- (a) Owing to the arrears of work in the Public Health Department it became my duty in May to advise the Council of the urgent need for the re-appointment of an Additional Sanitary Inspector, this position having being left vacant for a very long time. On a population basis the establishment of Sanitary Inspectors for the District should actually be three.
- (b) In November the Council reduced my services as part-time Medical Officer of Health from three-quarter time to half-time.

Apart from this the Public Health Staff remained unchanged throughout the year.

Laboratory Facilities.

- (a) Routine examinations of milk and water samples continued to be carried out at the Counties Public Health Laboratories, whose able head, Dr. E. V. Suckling died suddenly in November.

It is with deep regret that I record this untoward event.

Dr Suckling's opinion and advice were always readily available, and his passing is a severe loss to all those who had the privilege of consulting him.

- (b) Other laboratory examinations were made at St. Andrews Hospital, Billericay.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

During the year 8 samples of water were taken and submitted for bacteriological and for chemical analysis with the following results :—

- 7 samples from public supplies ; these were satisfactory.
- 1 sample from a well ; this proved to be unsatisfactory.

The supply of water from the two Companies which serve the district is constant and sufficient, and is kept under regular analytical observation. All samples have been reported to be pure and wholesome, and suitable for domestic purposes. The waters are not plumbo solvent.

There are twenty houses which are supplied with main water by means of stand pipes, representing a proportion of about 0.2 % of the population.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

		Inspections.	Re-inspections
Housing (Overcrowding) ...	...	19	1
Sanitary Defects ...	...	167	335
Infectious Diseases ...	...	34	2
Verminous or Dirty. .	...	25	31
Water Supply ...	...	18	25
Common Lodging Houses ...	...	1	—
Factories—Power ...	...	2	1
Factories—Non-Power ...	...	11	—
Bakehouses ...	...	6	—
Drains Inspected ...	...	59	85
Drains Tested ...	...	17	2
Cesspools ...	...	21	12
Accumulations of Refuse ...	...	3	2
Swine, Fowls, etc. ...	...	8	1
Tips, etc. ...	...	2	—
Rat Infested Premises ...	...	94	116
Ponds, Ditches, Watercourses ...	...	19	12
Council Houses ...	...	2	—
Miscellaneous Visits... ..	...	69	—
Disinfection of Premises ...	...	2	—

Civil Defence.

Decontamination Services ...	...	49	—
Public Shelters ...	...	8	1

Food Inspection.

Slaughterhouses ...	...	3	—
Meat Shops ...	...	52	—
Provision and other Food Shops ...	...	151	—
Dairies and Milk Shops ...	...	24	—
Cowsheds ...	...	79	—
Knackers Yards ...	...	47	—
Samples of Milk ...	...	31	—
Samples of Water ...	...	10	—
Horseflesh Shops ...	...	2	—

Number of Complaints received—401.

Owing to the continuing vacancy in the post of Additional Sanitary Inspector certain of the above inspections were made by myself.

HOUSING.

1. (a) Number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	181
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	378
2. Number found not to be in all respects reasonably fit ...	109

3.	Remedy of Defects during the year without service of Formal Notices :—	
	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	70
4.	Action under Statutory powers during the year :—	
(a)	Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	3
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	
(a)	By Owners...	3
(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners	Nil
(b)	Proceedings under Public Health Acts —	
(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
(a)	By Owners...	Nil
(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners	Nil

INSPECTION & SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

Milk Sampling.

Accredited Producers—

Number of samples taken	...	...	...	15
Number of samples satisfactory	...	...	...	15
All samples submitted to Methylene Blue and Coliform Tests.				

Pasteurised Milk—

Number of samples taken	..	...	...	14
Number of samples satisfactory	...	...	...	8
3 samples failed to pass the Bacteriological Test.				
3 samples failed to pass the Phosphatase Test.				

Undesignated Milk—

Number of samples taken	...	...	...	2
Number of samples satisfactory	...	...	...	1

Meat and Other Foods.

Number of Inspections	...	...	...	206
Total weight of meat and other foodstuffs condemned—				
2 tons 14 cwts. 1 qr. 17 lbs.				

Knackers Yards.

Number of Premises	...	...	...	1
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	47

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever.

There was a considerable drop in the number of notifications compared with the previous year.

Diphtheria.

I have already referred to the fact that a new low record in notifications of Diphtheria has been reached. This is most gratifying and I congratulate all parents who have helped in the work of improving the public health by presenting their children at an early age for immunisation against Diphtheria.

In co-operation with the Ministry of Health the campaign for increased immunisation was continued through the press and by posters. It was in May 1936 that I first introduced immunisation in this district, and there can be little doubt that the education of the public on this subject is steadily growing.

By the wish of the Ministry of Health one additional "boosting" dose is now being given to immunised children on attaining school age, when they come into contact with many other young people.

While this is excellent in theory it is not so easy in practice, owing to the poor attendance made at the Clinic by candidates for "boosting." In many cases of course families have moved to new addresses. It will probably take time to educate the public in the advantage of this extra safeguard offered to their sons and daughters.

Diphtheria Immunisation Clinic.

This Clinic as in former years was held by the courtesy of the County Medical Officer at the County Council's Treatment Centre in Queens Road. The Sister-in-Charge of the Civil Defence Mobile Unit and her staff again rendered me valuable help.

The following are the figures of attendances:—

Number of children who received their second injection	230	} Immunisation completed.
Number of children who received both injections	204	
Number of children who received their first injection	17	
Number of children who received a "boosting" injection	70	

Total number of children treated ... 317

Total number of injections given ... 521

The agent used for immunisation was Alum Precipitated Toxoid obtained free of charge from the Emergency Laboratory.

It was issued free from the Department to any General Practitioners in need of a supply, who immunised approximately 50 children in addition to the numbers treated at the Clinic.

ANNUAL REPORT - MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Erratum

Please note that on Page 7 of the above mentioned Report the heading "Mobile Unit" should be erased, and the words "A temporary" ~~pied~~ a terre" should follow immediately after the words "further extension".



Measles and Whooping Cough.

Notifications of Measles were remarkably few, this no doubt being mainly due to the fact that so many children had the disease during the previous year.

A supply of Immune Globulin was kept in readiness in the Public Health Department for issue to General Practitioners who might wish to treat contacts.

On the other hand Whooping Cough which had little incidence in 1943 claimed an increased number of victims.

Malaria.

While this is essentially a disease of warm climates there are mosquitoes in this country which under favourable conditions and in certain districts can convey the infection from man to man. The cases of Malaria however notified to me this year were all military patients admitted to hospitals in the district, and I have no evidence that infection was not contracted abroad. I make these observations as this is the first time that Malaria has been notified to me in Brentwood.

Scabies.

Cleansing arrangements continued in force at "Oakbank" where the work of bathing and painting cases of Scabies with Benzyl Benzoate was carried out by Civil Defence personnel.

The number of cases treated were as follows:—

Men	Women	Children	Total
1	23	57	81

Foot Clinic.

A new venture was begun in July by the establishment of a Foot Clinic open to the general public.

It was felt that the chiropodists carrying on private practise in the town were probably working to capacity and that further provision of treatment for minor ailments of the feet would meet with general approbation.

Accordingly a qualified chiropodist, Mr. S. Harris, was appointed to attend the Clinic for three sessions on one day a week. Subsequently two more sessions per week were added, and in due course no doubt there will be a further extension.

Mobile Unit.

A temporary "pied à terre" for the clinic was found at "Oakbank," Ongar Road, and the staff of the Civil Defence were utilised to provide a receptionist. These arrangements will require revision when hostilities have ended.

The scope of treatment is in accordance with the rules of the Board of Registration of Medical Auxiliaries and the clinic is under my general direction.

The scale of fees authorised for the various classes of patient is as follows, subject to revision as may from time to time be deemed necessary :—

<i>Adults.</i>		<i>First Attendance.</i>		<i>Subsequent Attendances</i>
Both feet	...	2s. 6d.	...	1s. 6d.
One foot	...	1s. 6d.	...	1s. 0d.

Children suffering from Plantar Warts, 6d. per attendance.

Old Age Pensioners, 6d. per attendance.

The numbers of patients, recorded by four-weekly periods from 3rd July to 11th December are shown below :—

<i>Adults</i>		<i>Children</i>		<i>Old Age Pensioners</i>		<i>Total No. of patients</i>
<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	
39	193	2	16	32	45	327

These 327 patients made a total number of attendances amounting to 898, giving an average of 2.74 treatments per patient.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Public Swimming Bath.

This continued to be a popular resort during the Summer. Samples of water were taken to check the efficiency of chlorination.

Schools.

Under the auspices of the Essex County Council I carried out medical inspection at all Elementary Schools in the District.

The standard of health was good, and the nutrition of the children was again markedly satisfactory. Dinners provided at schools are a real boon to both parents and children when rationing makes the work of the housewife so difficult.

ANALYSIS OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES UNDER AGE GROUPS.

Diseases

Age Groups

Totals.

	Under 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 and over	Total
Scarlet Fever...	2	4	5	19	5	6	6	...	1	...	48
Diphtheria	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Puerperal Pyrexia	4	...	...	...	4
Pneumonia	1	1	1	...	5	3	5	5	21
Dysentery ...	5	13	5	4	1	9	1	5	18	7	22	12	102
Erysipels	1	...	2	...	...	1	1	5
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	1	...	...	...	1
Whooping Cough ...	19	41	41	28	22	64	3	2	4	...	1	...	225
Measles	5	3	3	5	18	...	2	...	1	...	...	37
Jaundice	1	3	1	11	4	6	5	1	2	...	34
Malaria	20	2	...	...	22

